

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 and 20-24 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 18 and 20-24 are amended, and claim 19 is canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

ENTRY OF AMENDMENT AFTER FINAL REJECTION

Entry of the Amendment is requested under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 because the Amendment: 1) placed the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; 2) do not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration since the Amendment amplifies issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; 3) do not present any additional claims without canceling the corresponding number of final rejected claims; and 4) placed the application in better form for appeal, if any appeal is necessary. Entry of this Amendment is, thus, respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants appreciate that claims 1-17 are allowed; and claims 19-24 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected based claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, independent claim 18 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 19. Allowance of the application is, thus, respectfully requested.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. §102

The rejection of claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by Buehrer et al., U.S. Patent 6,614,857, has been rendered moot as claim 18 now includes the

allowable subject matter of claim 19. Reconsideration and allowance of this Application is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of claims 1-18 and 20-24 is respectfully requested.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C

By:  45,274

Gary D. Yacura, Reg. No. 35,416
P.O. Box 8910
Reston, Virginia 20195
(703) 668-8000

GDY/MLJ/DJC:lak